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froglog

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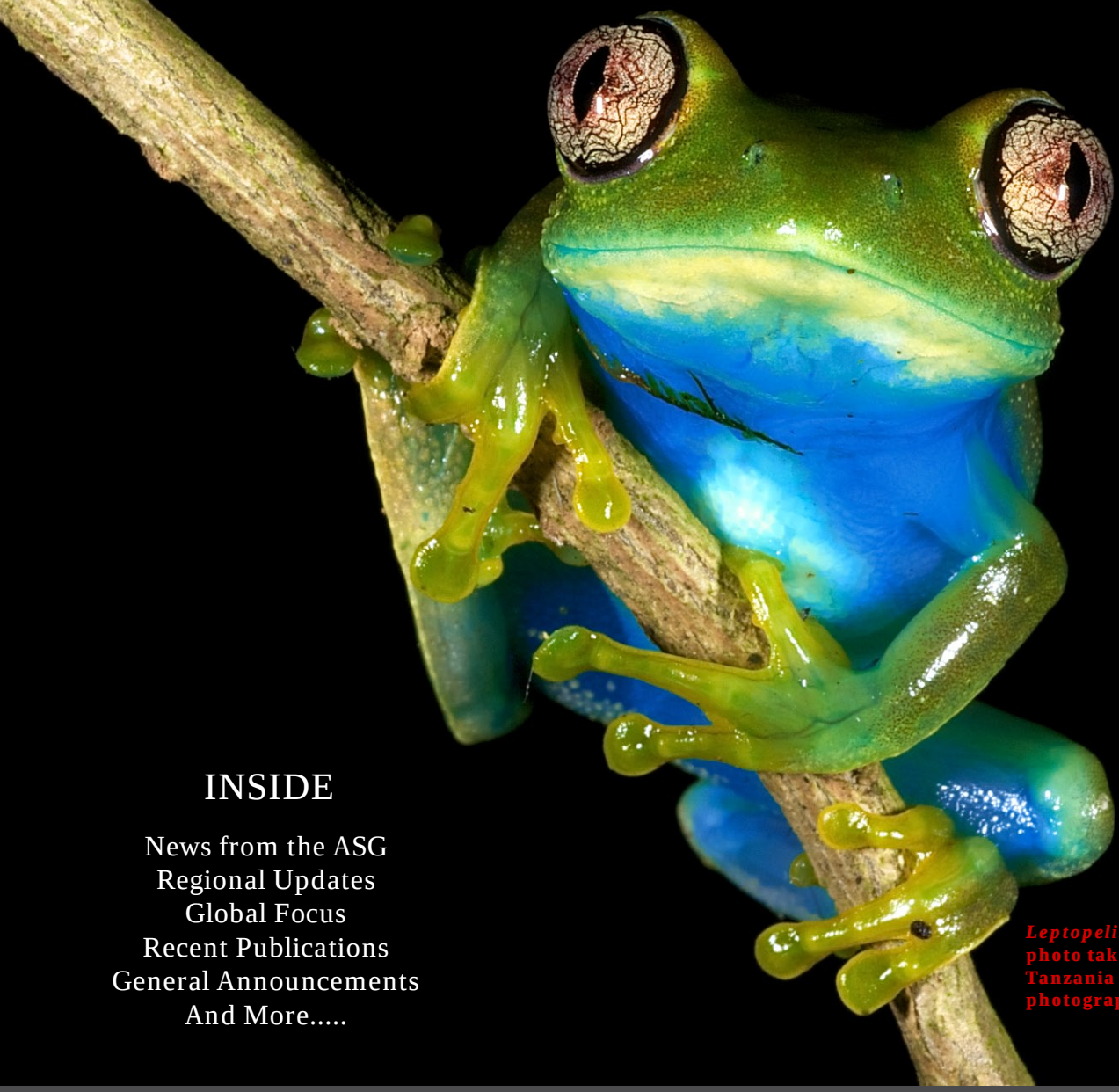

Leptopelis barbouri
photo taken at Udzungwa Mountains, Tanzania
photographer: Michele Menegon

INSIDE

Another "Lost Frog" Found.

Ansonia latidisca found in Borneo

ASA

The Amphibian Survival Alliance is launched

Rediscovery of one of the world's top 10 most wanted 'Lost Frogs', *Ansonia latidisca*, the Bornean Rainbow Toad, on Gunung Penrissen, Western Sarawak, Borneo

By Pui Yong Min, Ong Jia Jet and Indraneil Das

Ansonia latidisca, is an endangered species of tropical bufonid (Inger et al. 2004), currently known from two locations in the northwestern corner of Borneo. Prior to our discovery, this species was known from only three individuals. The holotype, an adult male, was collected by Johann Gottfried Hallier (1868–1932), a botanical assistant at the Buitenzorg (at present Bogor) Herbarium, from the summit of Gunung Damus (Kalimantan, Indonesia), the paratype, a female, taken by Robert Walter Campbell Shelford (1872–1912), entomologist with the Sarawak Museum, from Gunung Penrissen (Sarawak, Malaysia), in addition to a third specimen from the latter locality, collected by Eric Georg Mjöberg (1882–1938), Curator of the Sarawak Museum. Listed as one of the 'World's Top 10 Most Wanted Lost Frogs' by the IUCN/SSC Global Amphibian Specialist Group and Conservation International, A. latidisca has not been sighted since the late 1920s (see Inger 1966; Inger et al. 2004). The only published literature is the original description of Inger (1966), who referred to it as a montane species, with the holotype collected at about 1,200 m asl and the paratype at 1,300 m asl. The species is considered valid (see Manthey and Grossmann 1997; Matsui et al. 2009), and is listed as Endangered in Stuart et al. (2008) "in view of its extent of occurrence of less than 5,000 km^2 and area of occupancy of less than 500 km^2, with all individuals in fewer than five locations, and a continuing decline in the extent and quality of its habitat".

The 1,329 m Gunung Penrissen (Fig. 1) dominates western Sarawak, and forms the boundary between Malaysia's Sarawak State and Indonesia's Kalimantan Barat Province, and is drained mainly by Sungei Semadang and the headwaters of the Batang Kayan. The geology of this sandstone massif has been investigated by Wilford and Kho (1965), and comprises a matrix of sandstone and karst features, rising to the rugged ridges of the Penrissen range. The first and till now only multitaxic biotic inventory was conducted by Robert Shelford, on behalf of the Sarawak Museum, starting 5 May 1899 (described in Shelford 1916). Although Shelford's own interest was entomology (see Shelford 1901b), significant herpetological material was collected, which formed the basis of a couple of papers (Shelford 1901a; 1905), and others appear in list of material examined (e.g., Smith 1925; Inger 1966). Early collections of Shelford and his successors continue to form the mainstay in terms of material for research on various taxonomic groups of plants and animals of Gunung Penrissen.

Penrissen lies outside the protected area system of Sarawak, but is listed among the Important Bird Areas of the world by BirdLife International (www.birdlife.org). Threats to the area include resort development, poaching and habitat fragmentation (Anon. 2010a). The area has a long history of agriculture, especially rice, although rubber and pepper are also grown in all except the steepest terrain. Extraction of metallic and non-metallic minerals may also comprise a threat to the landscape in the future. Major development projects commenced in the Gunung Penrissen area in the last decade, with the view of promoting ecotourism and golf-tourism, the environmental effects of which remain largely unstudied. The 2,071 hectare resort, now operational close to the summit (at ca. 1,000 m asl), was planned by a Hawaii-based consortium (Tongg Clarke & McCelvey), and included an ambitious plan of development, including removal of most of the native vegetation, which was replaced largely with an 18-hole golf course and a 25 acre area of 'flower garden and theme parks' (Anon. 2010b). Baseline information on Penrissen's biodiversity is, however, meagre, the existing information stemming from Shelford's collection based on a single visit to these mountains (described in Shelford 1899).

We have initiated field work on Gunung Penrissen since August 2010, in a project initiated by The Search for Lost Frogs' campaign (see www.conservation.org/campaigns/lost_frogs/Pages/search_

Figure 1. View of summit of Gunung Penrissen, Sarawak, type locality of *Ansonia latidisca*.